

Personal comments from George Edwards

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Sent 10/7/05

**A) Can improvements be made in reference to types of boards to better meet public health, safety, welfare issues -- title or title/practice boards, quasi-judicial boards, or boards' administrative attachment?**

Yes, standardization needs to be in place. Confusion exists on whether some boards are regulating a title act or a practice act.

**B) How can membership composition be improved or revised to better address boards' public health, welfare, safety mandate? -- ratio of specialists on multispecialization boards and number of public members?**

I have worked with 9 member boards and 5 member boards. In my opinion boards larger than 5 members do not work together as well. The State Electrical Board consists of an electrical contractor, two levels of licensed electricians and two public members. It is the public members who bring the balance to the board. This board is functioning very well as a team. One observation is that too many board members are from the larger cities in the state. Board members from the rural areas bring a more balanced approach and less job protectionism.

**C) Can changes be made to improve administrative attachment -- this section (2-15-121, MCA) affects staffing, budgeting, rule adoption, quasi-judicial and quasi-legislative functions as well as report submission and representation.**

This seems to be an area where an improved clarification of what is an administrative duty would greatly help both the boards and the department.

**a) ways to improve investigations and enforcement/discipline**

I deal with this on a daily basis. The number one call I receive is requesting more compliance people to check for licensure. Currently, there are two individuals for the electrical and plumbing boards for the entire state.

**b) whether statutes need to be refined to address regulation of profession as well as practitioners**

In some cases a refinement may be needed. In the construction trades technology has been advancing rapidly. Some statutes reflect the way things were done years ago vs. today.

**c) whether the role of a board (or all boards) should go beyond licensing and discipline to include the providing of continuing ed, impairment programs**

As part of a multi-state licensing agreement, we discuss continuing education issues each year with other states. Boards need flexibility to be able to adjust continuing education standards to maintain agreements. The electrical trade has many individuals who work and are licensed in multiple states. Common continuing education requirements help these transient workers.

**d) whether scope of practice issues can be better addressed in other ways, as through umbrella boards**

no comment

**e) how to deal with future board creation/dissolution.**

no comment